

September 2026

September
Newsletter



Grace Lutheran Church

In the Moment

From Revelation 1:4—“Grace to you and peace from the One who is and who was and who is to come...”

It's almost time for our son's 45th birthday. As is our custom, we'll send a card and gift, then call and sing to him on his birthday. But there is something else we always do for our kids' birthdays: I scrounge through boxes of old photographs and find a picture of them at a young age to send along. For Nick this year, it's a photo of him standing on a huge snow-bank outside the parsonage in Iron County we then called home. He has a curly mop of hair and a child's shovel in his hand. It must have been a warm day; he isn't wearing a heavy coat. His eyes are lit up with the promise he would later fulfill in life. I suppose the picture was taken when he was about five years old, the age of his and wife Tina's youngest child now—Ida Ruth.

I look at that picture and feel wistful. I want to relive that moment and so many moments in our children's lives. Have you ever felt that way? Wished you could freeze moments in time, when you or people in your family were a certain age or experiencing life at it's very best?

Still, even while I feel wistful for a past I cannot relive, I also find myself thinking a lot about the future that awaits. Come October, Arlene and I will take a once in a lifetime trip to the Netherlands for two family reunions—most of her relatives never immigrated to this country. And then, we'll spend nearly two weeks in southern Spain, a place we've never been before. We are excited! In my spare time, I dig out the maps of Seville and Amsterdam and dream of places to visit, sights to see. I can't wait.

I have one foot in the past; the other, in the future. But what about the moment, this moment? Am I neglecting to live it fully?

We all do that, don't we? As the calendar flips from August to September, some of us are looking forward to October's cool weather and season of color. Others may wish it were May again, with the landscape greening and all of summer still ahead. Sometimes we spend so much time looking back in time or anticipating the future that we miss out on that which is happening in the moment.

Which is a shame. Because what we have, truly, **is** this moment. We can only meet the God who was and the God who will be in the God who is here with us now. To live in the present moment is, truly, to live in the presence of God.

September will have 30 days. Each day will have its beauty and challenges. To paraphrase Jesus slightly (a dangerous thing to do, I suppose!): “Today's troubles and today's joys are enough for today.” (See Matthew 6:25-34)

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I suppose it was ten or twelve years ago now, the day I drove out to Ishpeming to visit my dear friend and mentor Pastor Rudy Kemppainen, then in his early eighties. Rudy and Darley lived in an old home they'd refurbished on Lake Street. Since it was a lovely summer day, we decided to sit outside. As we talked, we watched pigeons roosting on the roofline of the lumber yard next door, which had once been St. John the Evangelist Church. (The "French" church, back in the day when being Catholic was not quite as important as being French or Italian or Polish and being Lutheran was not quite as important as being Finnish or Swedish or German!) We reflected on the building's past for a bit—the irony of the church becoming a lumber yard not lost on us. But then Rudy changed the subject. "Isn't this a beautiful day? You know, David, at this age, you've got to enjoy every day you're given."

Which was really good advice at the time. It still is. At any age.

This September, let us remind each other that life happens in the moment. And God is here with us, right now.

--Pr Dave

Preacher/Worship Leaders for the month of September

Sunday, September 6th: Pastor Chrys Levesque Hendrick

Sunday, September 13th: Pastor Dave Horn

Sunday, September 20th: Pastor Dave Van Kley

Sunday, September 27th: Pastor Don Ludemann

We will celebrate communion at each worship service!

News at Grace Lutheran

Transition Team: Continuing the Conversation at Grace

After worship on July 26th, a good number of folks from Grace met downstairs for a picnic lunch provided by the Transition Team (thank you Holly, Art, Dee, Arlene, Dave, and Jerry!), and the ensuing conversation about our congregation's life and ministry. We discussed three questions:

- 1) What are the needs of our community?
- 2) What are the strengths of our congregation?
- 3) What are growth areas our congregation needs to address?

We shared our thoughts around the tables and generated a list, which has been collated and is available for you to look at on the counter in the Narthex. Please take one home!

Everyone is asked to consider the thoughts that were shared on Sunday, reflect upon them, pray about them, and try to identify two goals or objectives you would suggest our congregation prioritize over the next five years. When we gather again, we will share our thoughts and ideas once more and seek to find some common ground – to identify a couple of objectives or goals that we can share with the church council and a pastoral candidate.

May the Holy Spirit dwell in our reflecting and praying and waiting as we prepare for a new chapter in our life together as God's people at Grace Lutheran Church!

The final meeting will be September 13th – details to follow!

Stewardship at Grace Lutheran

Begin again as in August with the paragraph about Matthew 13:31-32 and then...

Listen to another voice from our congregation:

OUR TREASURE

I believe it is very important to open our doors to the community of Gwinn and the surrounding area. I recently, in April, took a trip to Belgium and the Netherlands. While in Antwerp, Belgium I was informed by our guide that 90% of the churches in the city have closed its doors. Religion in this western Europe has seen a great decline in its religious practices.

I don't want this decline to happen to the Gwinn area, not just with Lutherans but all other denominations. I have been coming to Grace Lutheran for 3.5 years and have been a member for two years. I split my time between Grace and Holy Trinity in Raleigh North Carolina, and it is nice to see when we add new members to either church.

I would like to mention the importance of giving and supporting Grace Lutheran. Our offerings not only support our church; we support the community. Growth of Grace Lutheran membership will also increase the financial benefits to the church and to the Gwinn community. Financially we need an estimated \$3000.00 per Sunday to support our church. Usually, this figure is reached during the summer months. Growth of year-round residence would reach our goal for the non-summer months and our average goal.

I hope and pray that the spirit of Trinity will work its magic and allow Grace to increase its membership and support.

--Steve Dolinski

Name Grace's newsletter!

Following Pastor Jack Busche's initiative, we've been putting out a monthly newsletter for several years now at Grace. But the newsletter doesn't have a name! We're looking to you for ideas—what shall we call our newsletter? Can you think of a catchy title that expresses what we're all about in life and mission at Grace?

Some local examples are the Bethany (Republic) Window, the Messiah (Marquette) Messenger, the Bethel (Ishpeming) Evangel. Please send/give your ideas to Rebecca in the church office!

Special Sundays at Grace Lutheran

SEPTEMBER SUNDAYS

September 6—Labor Day Sunday also marks the beginning of the **Feast of Creation** in Christ, a season increasingly observed in ecumenical circles. Look for special texts and a message that explores God's gift of the creation in all of its richness and God's call to us to exercise wise and loving stewardship of the creation. In many ways, we in the Lutheran tradition have undervalued the "First Article" of the Creed—God as Creator—as we emphasize the "Second Article's focus on the incarnation of God in Christ Jesus. Yet, Jesus is the Word, the Word present in the beginning, and "in him, all things come into being." Today, we are recovering that awareness. Pastor Chrys Levesque Hendrick will lead our worship on the 6th .

September 13—16th Sunday after Pentecost. With Labor Day behind us, we celebrate the unofficial beginning of the fall season. Our children and grandchildren are back in school and teachers, like Shane and Peter Ruokola, are back in the classroom. In some churches, Sunday School also begins, though for us, the Kid's Café program will not begin for another week yet. It's also Grandparents' Day on the secular calendar—why not **bring a grandchild with you to church on this Sunday**, so we can celebrate together! We also "kick off" the fall Stewardship emphasis on this Sunday, with the first of three brief temple talks. Pastor Dave Horn will lead us in worship on the 13th , and Pastor Dave Van Kley will preside at communion.

September 20—17th Sunday after Pentecost. We will commission the teachers and helpers for Kids' Café, which begins on Monday! Also, that same day, following worship, head up to Marquette for lunch at the Texas Roadhouse for the most unique fundraising experience ever! Just having lunch there at no extra cost helps fund the program for the year. (Read about Dine to Donate elsewhere in this copy of the newsletter.) Pastor Dave Van Kley is our preacher and presider on the 20th .

September 27—18th Sunday after Pentecost. Mikael Leppaluoto will be sharing a temple talk as we continue to think about our role as stewards of God's gifts as members of Grace. On this Sunday, we also observe the **Native American Day of Remembrance**, dedicated to remembering and expressing our solidarity with our indigenous neighbors who were placed in government and church boarding schools against their will. Please read more about this elsewhere in the newsletter. If you have orange in your wardrobe, wear it that day! Pastor Don Ludemann, who is also a professor at NMU, will be our preacher and presider on the 27 th .

Special Sundays at Grace Lutheran

SEPTEMBER SUNDAYS

Walking With Our Indigenous Neighbors (WWOIN) Ministry Team

September 30th is the National Day of Remembrance for Indian Board Schools

We pray for healing truth for Native American children, families, and communities, whose lives have been harmed through Indian Boarding Schools. Heal the hurt across the generations, re-weave the connections lost, and build up actions toward community, justice, and love. God of grace, receive our prayer.

On September 30, native and non-native people across the United States and Canada pause to remember that from the years 1819-1969, countless indigenous children were taken from their homes and placed in boarding schools, operated either by the US government or as mission schools partially funded by the government, by various Christian denominations. One of the government funded mission schools was operated by the Norwegian Lutheran Church—a predecessor body to the ELCA—Bethany Indian Mission at Wittenberg, Wisconsin. This day invites us into reflection, truth-telling, and solidarity with Native communities who continue to bear the trauma of these institutions.

The WWOIN ministry team encourages you to include Remembrance Day in your congregation's life and worship (either Sunday, September 27th or October 4th). Ideas include:

Wear an orange shirt (Any orange shirt, or special design shirts that support the National Boarding School Healing Coalition

<https://nabshc.myshopify.com/collections/day-of-remembrance-orange-t-shirts>)

Use worship resources from WWOIN page on Synod website (hymns, prayers, land acknowledgement)

<https://nglsynod.org/walkingwithourindigenousneighbors/>

Plan an education session or series using learning kit resources from the ELCA Truth Seeking Truth Selling website <https://www.tstti.org/> or a WWOIN team presenter

Participate in remembrance activities led by local native communities, if open to the public.

The damage inflicted on our indigenous neighbors because of the boarding schools is incalculable. Generations have struggled to regain their sense of worth and identity as native people. As they go about their healing, it is our calling as people of God to support them.

WELCA at Grace Lutheran

Women of the ELCA

Quilters

We will meet every Tuesday (except the second Tuesday) at 1:00 in the fellowship hall downstairs. Our quilts are sent to Lutheran World Relief in October. New quilters are welcome. No previous quilting experience necessary. Join us for a cup of coffee at 1:00 and see what we do!

Naomi Circle

Naomi Circle meets the third Thursday of each month in the fellowship room downstairs at 2:00pm. We have a Bible study from the Gather magazine, followed by a coffee fellowship. All women are welcome to join us!

Hope Circle

We will be meeting once more for a luncheon/dinner, then we will be off for the summer! Meetings will resume again in the fall.

Community Outreach:

We have several projects in the works:

School kits & Health kits - We currently have all of the supplies here; we just need to assemble the kits and distribute them in October to Messiah Lutheran Church in Marquette. This is part of a Lutheran World Relief mission project.

Monthly meal kits - We are financially able to now expand to a few more families! We currently serve 42 families but would like to expand to 48. These meals include a main course, with recipe and all ingredients pre-portioned out for ease of cooking, a vegetable side, a starch or bread side, and a dessert. All kits include a recipe on how to prepare each meal, so the families can then save this recipe for future use. These kits are delivered to each family with the usage of our ministry van, and we are very thankful for this!

Looking forward to the Christmas season: we will be supporting Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child" by preparing shoeboxes for children, in which the congregation can choose a box to fill personally. Operation Christmas Child partners with churches and other ministries in more than 100 countries each year to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with millions of children and invite them to follow-up discipleship. More info on how to get involved will follow in the coming months.

Youth Ministry

The Synod's Youth Ministry events are for youth currently in Middle or High School.

If you know of any youth who would be interested in going to any of these events - **please RSVP to our office at 906-346-3156.**



Sunday, September 27 – Sugarloaf Mountain and Beach Adventure

Superior Conference youth between 6th-12th grades are invited to hike Sugarloaf Mountain and explore a local beach in Marquette. Participants will meet in the large parking lot at Sugarloaf Mountain to begin the adventure. Contact Stacy McEachern with questions.

Location: Meet at Sugarloaf Mountain in the large parking lot– County Road 550, Marquette, MI

Time: 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Saturday, October 10 – Load the Semi-Truck for Lutheran World Relief

Youth (and adults!) are invited to help load quilts, school supplies, and baby kits onto the semi-truck for Lutheran World Relief between 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. CST. The morning will include a Blessing of the Hands, and donuts will be available for the down time between truck arrivals. Bring a water bottle!

Location: Zion Lutheran Church – 2714 James Street Marinette, WI *NOTE THE NEW LOCATION*

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Central Standard Time

Saturday, October 17 – Grand Get-Together at Larry's Corn Maze - Multi-Conference Event!

Youth between 6th-12th grade are invited to join multiple Conferences for an afternoon of fall fun at the Larry's Corn Maze in Rock, MI (formerly Hayes Corn Maze). Dinner will be provided and carpooling from various Conference locations is available. Please contact our office to RSVP and receive details about carpooling and cost.

Location: Hayes Corn Maze – 3474 Saint Nicholas Rd. Rock, MI

Time: 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (add additional time for carpooling)

Must RSVP to these events 1 week prior

Youth Ministry

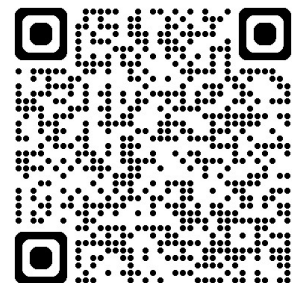
Have you heard about our Kids' Café that we have on Mondays during the school year?

Our Kids' Café program is similar to that of a Sunday School meets youth group meets fellowship meal! Mondays after school, youth between the ages of 4 (pre-K) thru 12 (or 5th grade) meet at Grace. We share Bible Stories, play games and do activities, and enjoy a nice meal together. There are often crafts that they can take home, songs to sing, and lots of love to share. PLENTY of laughs as well!

Our kids also harvest our garden upstairs in the fall! How wonderful that they're learning about planting seeds, nurturing them, and watching them grow! I'm thinking of a mustard seed parable... are you?

If you know of any school-aged youth who would like to join us - please visit our website, www.graceingwin.org, our Facebook page, or use the QR code below to register! Also please spread the word as we will welcome all children, as Jesus taught us to!

We are always looking for helpers on Mondays! You can signup for **one** Monday or **multiple** Mondays. If you have a special talent (music, crafts, games, storytelling), please share that with our office when signing up. If you can volunteer from 3-6 - WONDERFUL! If you can volunteer only from 5-6... ALSO WONDERFUL!



Youth Ministry

Have you ever been to a fundraiser in which you personally **DO NOT** contribute any money - but the company does?!

Texas Roadhouse is hosting a “Dine to Donate” fundraiser for our Youth Ministries. You simply go there to dine, and present this “flyer” to your waitress. **That’s it!!**

Texas Roadhouse will collect all participating receipts, tally them up, and donate 10% of the total sales to our cause. **The donations come from them - not you!** How easy is that?

Please share with your friends, family, neighbors... everyone! The more patrons they have dine there - the more receipts we collect - the more money we raise for our Youth Ministry! We will have a table in front of the restaurant with more of these flyers, so if you misplace yours or don’t have any to hand out - no worries!



News at Grace Lutheran

Prayer Chain

Did you know that we at Grace have a prayer chain? If you, or someone you know, is in need of prayers of any kind, please contact Pat Seger at 906-346-6273, and she will “start the chain”. The chain is made up of people within our congregation, who will specifically pray for your needs. Pat will contact the first person on the chain, let them know the prayer request; then that person will pray specifically for you, and contact the next person in the chain. If you wish to remain anonymous - that is fine too! We are all in need of prayers! If you would like to become a part of this chain, please contact Pat Seger.

Save the Date: Synod Women's Organization Convention and Retreat

September 18th-20th at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp will be the Convention (18th) and Retreat (19-20) for Synod Women's Organization. This year's theme is “Living Waters, Renewal and Refreshment”. Check in is Friday from 3-5pm (CST), and event ends on Sunday at 11am (CST). Cost is \$92.50 for a duplex, and \$107.50 for the lodge. Cost includes all 5 meals, bible study, crafts, yoga, singing, sauna, campfire – and more! Registration forms are in the office downstairs.

Blessings, Lynnette

UPCOMING EVENTS:

9/18-9/20 - Synod Women's Organization Convention and Retreat

9/20 - Dine to Donate fundraising event at Texas Roadhouse, 11am-3pm

*This fundraiser is in support of our Youth programs at Grace.

In Our Thoughts

Prayer Concerns

Gerry Stille	Marlys Pickett	Sally Weingartner
Darlene Faucher	Donald Hakala	Gloria LaFave
Lois Blanck	Harold Zaborowski	Edna Roberts
Charlie Blanck	Deb McNabb	Bill Hatch
Louise Spickerman	Arlene Keskimaki	Jackie Kangas
Sarah Johnson	Richard Erickson	Sandee Kangas
Mike Stefanski	LuAnne Seger	Dave Kangas
Mary Stefanski	Alice Harbin	Chris Mitchell
Shannon McNabb	Brian Seger (Pat's nephew)	Elanor Rose Beauchaine
Kelly Kienert	Dana Pelkola	Family of Wendy Wahlen
Amanda Noel	Pastor DJ Rasner	Hannah (Granddaughter)

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dee Mattson	9/1	Shane Ruokola	9/2
Linda Nichols	9/4	Soren Spickerman	9/8
Rell Spickerman	9/10	Lynnette Broxson	9/11
Mark Ingalls	9/11	Kim Mooday	9/12
Sue DeGroot	9/19	Dan Carilli	9/29
Dana Pelkola	9/29	Peter Ruokola, Jr.	9/30

Volunteers at Grace Lutheran

August Sunday Worship Volunteers

Readers:

September 6th: Arlene Johnson

September 13th: Sharon Groff

September 20th: LuAnne Krueger

September 27th: Lynnette Broxson

Communion Assistants:

September 6th: Ray Richard

September 13th: Jean Armatti

September 20th: Kathy Keskimaki

September 27th: Mary Connors



Fellowship Servers:

September 6th: Shane Ruokola & Theresa Hruska

September 13th: Becky Marjonen & Sheryl Steimke

September 20th: Arlene Johnson & Terri Brintlinger

September 27th: Ruth Forgette & Lynnette Broxson



Greeters:

September 6th: Lynn Marjonen

September 13th: ***NEEDED***

September 20th: Kathy Keskimaki & Mary Connors

September 27th: ***NEEDED***



Church Council Updates

Grace Lutheran Church

Church Council

8/18/26

Present: Interim Pastor Dave Van Kley, Paul Makela, Bill Kangas, Bill Koski, Jean Armatti, Gary Howard, Ruth Forgette, Dee D'Ambrosia, Karen Nelson GUEST: Arlene Van Kley

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Paul Makela, President. Pastor Dave lead with a devotion.

Motion by Ruth, second by Bill Koski, to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Reviewed July Council minutes. Motion by Ruth, second by Gary, to approve. Motion carried.

Paul reviewed the financial reports. He noted the water bill has increased significantly, likely from watering the garden. Council discussed having a "Community Garden" sub-group next year. Paul made a motion to approve the reports as written. Second by Gary. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Karen called twice re: request from Gwinn Booster Club for donation for construction of a new press box -- no response. Will let request go for now.

Pastor's report reviewed. Pastor Dave noted he will no longer be able to work as of 9/29 with scheduled vacations, ongoing medical issues, and family visiting this fall. He will also no longer be our interim pastor as of 10/1 per his agreement. Motion by Karen, second by Dee to accept report. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE and TEAM REPORTS

Personnel: Ruth reported Rebecca's 3-month evaluation was held. She is doing an excellent job. Committee recommends increasing her wage from \$18/hour to \$20/hour. Motion by Ruth, second by Jean, to increase Rebecca's wage from \$18/hour to \$20/hour. Motion carried. Pastor Dave also suggested adding a continuing education line for the Parish Administrator position in next year's budget so she can attend educational conferences.

Finance: Continues to meet.

Transition Team: Arlene Van Kley gave the report at the beginning of the meeting and was excused. She reported the team is wrapping up and will have 1 more congregation gathering likely in September. Plan to turn over the information to the Call Committee.

Kid's Café: Updates reviewed.

Worship and Music: Ongoing monthly.

Stewardship: Meets tomorrow.

Property: Bill Kangas reported that Metro did an inspection on the elevator, should not be any more issues – they will be taking over the contract in October. Reviewed findings/improvements/recommendations from Forsyth Township Fire Dept and Summit Fire Protection annual fire extinguisher inspection. Service Proposal from Summit reviewed. Motion by Paul, second by Gary, to approve the service proposal of \$564.00 from Summit. Motion carried. Bill recommended going with a certified electrician for any needed electrical work.

Church Council Updates

OLD BUSINESS

Range Visit/Security Issues: Proposals approved.

Bylaw changes: Ongoing process. Pastor Dave has some recommendations and will bring to our next council meeting.

Feeding America: Next distribution event is 10/1.

Blood Drive: Scheduled for tomorrow.

Adults in Youth Ministry Retreat at FLLC: Rebecca attended, Daisy and Diane were not able to. Rebecca had noted that she felt like an outsider there.

NEW BUSINESS: None

Council Member Comments: Noted that Julie is doing a good job with the cleaning.

Pastor Dave lead with closing prayer.

Motion by Ruth, second by Gary, to adjourn at 11:16. Motion carried.

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 15, 10:00 a.m.

Submitted by Karen Nelson